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REPORT

U. S.
BUREAU OF
EDUCATION.

OF THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

MARYLAND

Agricultural College,

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND.

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ANNAPOLIS:
Advertiser,--Print.

1880.

REPORT.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE,

December 4th, 1879.

To the Honorable, the General Assembly of Maryland:

Under the provisions of the Charter, The Board of Trustees of the Maryland Agricultural College submit the following report:

In the period that has intervened since they had the honor of transmitting their last report, the College has made excellent progress in its several departments, and is now being fast developed into such an Institution of practical and theoretic learning, as was contemplated by its founders and the wise legislators, who by their act, gave it being.

The regulations, adopted by the Board, making education more practical and directly connected with Agriculture, have been found to work well. The teachings in this Department have been made exceedingly instructive and interesting, and during the present session we have a very much larger per centage of students, who look forward to making farming the pursuit of their lives, than at any former date in the history of the College. Our young men are taught to regard agriculture, in its true light, as the most honorable and ennobling as well as the first occupation of man—affording labor not only for the hands, but presenting a field for intellectual and scientific research, which will richly reward the ambition of the most aspiring, and at the same time be made to yield compensating returns in the way of revenue. Farming need not and should not be the unintellectual labor, that it has been. The earth, the great Laboratory of nature, is full of hidden mysteries, and science stands ready to assist in their

the farming interest of the State, should have constantly before them the most choice of the several herds, best adapted to our latitude and farming, that they may take home with them and disseminate proper views, and thus add to individual and State wealth. The management of the dairy, the feeding for the shambles, and the proper care of farm animals constitute important items in the profits of husbandry, and the animals in these several departments should be such as would enlist an interest in the students. An appropriation of five thousand dollars, placed at the disposal of the trustees for this purpose would, we hope we may suggest, be a most judicious use of the public money, which, in a few years, would make return, indirectly to be sure, to the Treasury of the State of many times this small outlay. The means of the College are inadequate to make these purchases. The trustees, by the strictest frugality, can effect them only by degrees, and in a long time; and their value for comparison is thus measureably lost.

The students now at the College should have these advantages; we ask them, not for ourselves, but for the sons of the State, who are given in our charge to be educated with a view to the improvement of her soil, and the promotion of her general prosperity. The State expects good results from this College; the trustees and the faculty will use their best efforts to prevent disappointment, but let us not be left without the proper means to secure them.

By good financial management the President, with the assistance of the faculty, has, in the short time of his administration, paid off an indebtedness of $13,288 44, and the College is, for the first time since its organization, free from debt. It will be the constant aim of the trustees to keep expenditures within their means.

The corporation receives from the State a donation of $6,000, and from interest on U. S. land scrips $7,288 44, making an annual income of $13,288 44. To the unreflecting and those who know but little of the expenses that belong to such an institution, this sum would seem ample to accomplish all that was contemplated in its endowment, but it must be borne in

mind that the State requires free tuition shall be given to sixty students, and should there be more than these, which we trust there soon will be, the trustees have extended it to all applicants properly prepared, coming from within the limits of the State, and in order to place the advantages intended to be secured within their reach, have fixed the charge for board, washing and other incidental expenses at figures that but little more than cover cost. Without the exercise of this liberal policy, free tuition would be nugatory. The cost of fitting up a labratory with proper instruments for illustration, providing suitable philosophical apparatus, and keeping up the supply by additions of new improvements, is very considerable. A library should be provided, and increased by constant yearly additions. To command talent and attainments we must give such compensation as is paid by other similar institutions. The item of salaries to our President and Professors will then alone absorb nearly the whole amount that we receive annually from the State, and interest on land scrip. By the instructions of such competent teachers only, can results such as we all desire be obtained. We must have first-class Professors if we would have the influence of the College felt in the development of our farm resources, and the enhancement of the taxable capacity of our lands. The debt extinguished, after the deduction of current and absolute expenses the College is devoting the means at its command to the fitting up the laboratory and furnishing it with suitable instrument and apparatus necessary to make the nicer analyses. It will soon be able, by using in part the labor of the students, to build a green-house, which will afford facilities to the Professors of Agriculture and the Farm Superintendent, to give practical instruction in the habits of plants, and their propagation from seeds and cuttings. The trustees hope, within the next year, by the exercise of careful economy, to be able to construct workshops, and furnish them with a steam engine and the tools of the mechanic, that our young men may be taught practically to work in wood, iron and stone, and thus obtain that knowledge which comes from doing a thing with one's own hands. In connection with these practical teachings, we desire to refer the members of our Legislature to our cour-

of study, which they will find appended to this report. They will learn that the College is devoting its entire energies to secure to the students a knowledge of practical agriculture and the sciences immediately connected with it. There are, to be sure, studies pursued in the rudimental department, such as reading, writing, arithmetic, grammer, geography, belles-lettres, logic, &c., the connection of which is not so apparent, but these constitute the basis of all educational systems, and without them no proper superstructure can be reared. As the study of the ancient languages requires much time, it is left optional with the the students to pursue them or not. Those can do so who desire to take a more extended course; but all are required to pursue the studies prescribed in the curriculum, which have a bearing upon or connection in anyway with agriculture or the operations of a farm. Students are daily taken into the field by the Professor of Agriculture and instructed in the practical exercise of the farm. Some of the young men at the College pay a portion of their expenses by four hours labor every day on the farm. They are encouraged by liberal compensation, which, it is hoped, in time, will induce others to assist in their own support, and thus lighten the burden of education to their parents and friends, as well as secure the beneficial results of such course to themselves.

Under the Assessment Law of last session, the assessors of Prince George's county have thought it their duty to make assessment of the property of the College, and a return to the office of the County Commissioner of its valuation. Under this action the Commissioners have, through the Collector of taxes, presented a bill of some six hundred and seventy odd dollars, which they require the College to pay. The trustees cannot for a moment suppose, that under a proper interpretation of the law, the property and effects of the College have been made liable to taxation. Such could never have been the intention of the Legislature. The State is one-half owner of the entire property, and endowed it with an annual donation of $6,000, on the fulfillment of the condition by many of her patriotic citizens to raise the sum of $50,000 for the purchase of a farm and

the erection of buildings, and it cannot be supposed that it was her purpose to impose a tax, in impairment of her liberality and in derogation of her plighted faith. The trustees would, therefore, pray your honorable bodies to enact a law, which shall relieve the College from this present charge, and give exemption from taxation in time to come. There can be no expediency in encumbering the State with the costs of collecting a tax, which comes out of her own property as well tax the State House and the Governor's Mansion and grounds to pay the interest on her bonds.

It has been objected to the Agricultural College that they teach military tactics, and that the trustees have diverted it, from the purposes of its founders, and made it a place where young men are prepared for the Naval School and West Point. Coming from the sources that these charges do, from those who should be better informed, some of your members may be surprised to learn that there is no substantial foundation for such injurious representations. A sufficient refutation (one would think,) should be found in the composition of the Board of Trustees. It is made up of farmers of age and long experience, with the exception of a single member, who worthily and ably represents a branch of the mechanical interest closely allied to the agricultural, and who has himself been a most successful horticulturist. What interest, what motive can these men have in alienating this institution from the purposes for which many of them assisted in establishing it, and in the prosecution of which all of them have a direct and controlling interest? In the discharge of their duties they look to the College charter, the laws subsequently made, and the Act of Congress, donating land script to the State. In these they find no dobtful interpreter. By the provisions of the charter (chapter 97, of the laws of 1856,) the arts and sciences connected with agriculture are to be theoretically and practically taught "in addition to the usual course of scholastic learning." And by chapter 178 of the Acts of 1865, it is made the leading object of the College to

teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, "without excluding other scientific and classical studies," and including military tactics. Without the advantage of having the Act of Congress donating public landscript by our side, we will state that the language employed is almost, if not entirely, identical with that of the last Act referred to, in meaning certainly the same. The trustees desire to do their duty honestly under these several requirements. They believe that the General Assemblies of 1856 and 1865, well considered the subject of agricultural education, and that the injunctions of the Act of Congress are wise and salutary. Looking to these for directions, they find that the Acts of the Legislature enjoin them to lay the substratum of the education of the farmers of the State in scholastic learning, and that the Act of Congress prohibits them from excluding scientific and classical studies, other than those related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, and says that we must teach military tactics.

From the language of these laws, it is plain that the General Assembly and the Congress of the United States require that the farmer shall be an educated man; that he shall not only be taught to work with his hands, but also with his brain; that he shall be mentally as well as physically educated, the cunning right hand taking its directions from cultivated intellect. Taking these Acts in good faith as our chart and compass, endeavoring to fulfill all their requirements and disregard none, in honor bound to ignore no portion of them, military tactics not excepted, our course, we think, is a plain one. It will be found laid down in our curriculum of studies, and in the course of instruction to our students in practical agriculture, given in detail in the reports of the President of the faculty, made to the Board of Trustees in June and December, 1877, which we desire to embody in this report, as dealing more in detail and containing more specific information in reference to the subjects to which we refer. We wish to place before the General Assembly full information in regard to the conduct of this College. It concerns the State's interest most deeply. The responsibility that rests upon us as agents of the stock-

holders, and none the less agents of the State, we trust, we properly apprehend; and lest we may have omitted anything in this statement, which it is important for the General Assembly to know, or may have in any respect overstated its condition, we will be pleased if they will send a joint committee to the College to investigate, and report to their respective bodies. The importance of the proper education of those who are to be, in a great measure, the guides to the farming interest of the State, representing more than one-half her whole population, and intimately connected with every other interest, can not be overestimated. The State, by a liberal policy, has demonstrated her conviction of the advantage of general rudimental education; of her 17¼ cents tax in the one hundred dollars which she takes rom her people, she bestows ten cents in the hundred dollars of the amount upon their education. This is up to the standard of the enlightened age in which we live, and must be ranked among the crowning honors of the State; but we trust she will not feel that she has filled the measure of her duty to that class of her citizens who contribute so largely to her taxes, who supply her daily wants, and constitute the actual basis of her wealth, until she has investigated the requirements of the institution she has endowed for their education, made an appropriation of twenty-five hundred or three thousand dollars for an experimental station on the farm in connection with it, and such further provisions for its complete equipment with all the aids necessary to practical agricultural education, and to instruction in the kindred arts and sciences. All of which is most respectfully submitted.

Signed by order of the Board of Trustees.

JAMES T. EARLE,
Acting President.